



ΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΗ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ / CHRISTIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF BYZANTINE
AND POST-BYZANTINE ARCHAEOLOGY AND ART, FOUNDED IN 1884

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RESOLUTION

Athens, May 29, 2020

The Christian Archaeological Society wishes to reach out to the international academic community and the international organizations for the protection of world heritage expressing its deep concern for the emerging attempt to alter the character of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople/Istanbul as a world monument. Our concern is heightened by the latest move to downgrade Hagia Sophia's character as a monument. The construction of a model of the wall of Constantinople in front of the monument and the organization of a ceremony that will be broadcast via satellite with the reading of prayers in celebration of the fall of the city to the Ottomans in 1453 and the reading of the Quran inside the monument are not in line with the function of Hagia Sophia as a museum and a world heritage monument included in the UNESCO list since 1985.

We would like to stress that the Church of Hagia Sophia (the Church of the Wisdom of God), an emblematic monument of the Byzantine Empire, which in its current form was inaugurated on December 27, 537 by the Emperor Justinian, has been operating as museum (Ayasofya Müzesi) since 1935, by decree of Kemal Ataturk.

The Christian Archaeological Society once again appeals to international organizations for the protection of cultural property, to intervene, so that the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople/Istanbul, this unique monument, preserves its recognized character as an outstanding monument of the world's cultural heritage and remain an inalienable asset of humanity.

On behalf of the Board of the ChAE